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THE INDIA CULTURES QUARTERLY

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VOL. 16 FIRST QUARTER 1958 NO. 1

NOTICE

We regret the delay in appearance of this issue, due to illness of our esteemed editor and to printing difficulties. This issue has been assembled by Dr H. H. Presler, and has been submitted to a different printer. The forgiveness of our subscribers is requested.

Foreign (outside India) readers are invited to become permanent subscribers to THE INDIA CULTURES QUARTERLY, which aims to record factual information of use to students interested in the cultures of India. Please note the low annual fee which has been adjusted to the cost price of printing and mailing, on a non-profit basis.

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Readers in India are advised that the subscription fee is Rs 2 for salaries of Rs 200 or less, and Rs 4 for salaries of Rs 201 or more. Due to the dissolution of the previous arrangements for this twenty-year old magazine and to the temporary suspension of publication, we were not able to gauge accurately when your subscription is due. Accordingly we shall assume that all old subscriptions are due in the middle of the present publishing year. If you know the date in your case, please advise us. Note that henceforth Dr R. D. Immanuel will be in charge of editorial matters (as in the past), and Dr H. H. Presler will be responsible for the Mid-India feature and assisting with the business details.

TAMIL BHAKTI IN MADHYA PRADESH

I. JESUDHASON

The Tamil immigrants in Jabalpur living in scattered groups in different parts of the city, though far away from their home land, are still observing their traditional festivals at their respective seasons. In my observation the low caste Tamil groups are more regular in keeping the bhakti type of festivals than the educated Tamil immigrants. Though this Tamil immigrant population is acculturised in the midst of the strong Hindi speaking population, nevertheless one can very clearly see the traditional bhakti system of South India.

I visited the 'Andal pujai' a Tamil festival, observed by certain immigrant Tamil groups of Jabalpur city between December 15, 1957 and January 14, 1958. This year the festival consisted of processional singing and dancing through the streets every day of the season from 4.30 a.m. to 6.30 a.m., visiting Tamil homes. On the final day occurred the ritual marriage ceremony of Andal, the milkmaid, with a feast for all those gathered for the festival. I shall try to describe briefly in this article a typical singing procession, proceeding each day of the season, and the closing ritual ceremonies with the songs used. One can see in these a synthesis of several bhakti traditions. The community has no hesitation in using songs taken from Tamil religious cinema songs, Hindi cinema songs, songs of Periyalvar as well as the ritual songs for the occasion, namely the 'Thiruppavai', as written by the famous Tamil poetess, Andal (who has the same name as the milkmaid whose marriage is celebrated in this festival).

The poetess, Andal, pictures herself as one of the gopis, the milkmaid friends of the divinity, rising early in the morning and persuading her friends to accompany her in order to arouse the sleeping divinity. Their aim is to secure from him a drum, as a pledge of bliss. Possibly the drum is intended to suggest the triumph of acknowledged love. The story, according, to these poems, is that after preliminary preparations, the maidens have gathered together and are trying to rouse the divinity, wakening first the gate keeper. Then they appeal to his consort and all together unite to call the divinity and explain what benefits they expect. The poetess speaking in her own person promises eternal blessings to those who have made her song their own.

The traditional story goes that after waking the divinity, he gave the drum to Andal, the Gopi. Then Andal became the wife of the divinity. The marriage ceremony is conducted on the last day of the Andal pujai.

Let us see one of the early morning singing and dancing processions. On 11th January 1958 the singing procession started at 4.5 p.m. When we reached the Tamil temple from where the procession had to start,

twenty Tamilians were assembled in the temple, the majority of whom were children, both boys and girls; the rest were men, six in number. They were sitting on the floor of the temple and singing praises to God, using musical instruments such as harmonium, thabala and cymbals. The pujari was leading the singers in singing. A picture of Andal was placed in front of the singers by the side of an idol, and with an oil lamp in front of it.

At the start of the procession all stood up facing the picture of Andal, and in a devotional mood folded their hands while the priest recited the following verses from the songs of Periyalvar, the Tamil poet. The same verses were recited again at the close of the procession when it reached back to the temple.

Reverence, reverence be unto thee
O mighty God who destroyed demons;
Thou art like saphire in glory,
Forever blest be the beauty of thy holy feet.

For many many years,
For thousand of years, for crores of years and for ever;
All hail to God! Let no rift come between
Thy slaves and thee.

All hail to Srimati who dwells on thy right in lustre
All hail to the glorious discus in thy right hand
All hail to conch panchagavyam sounding in fight.

Translation of songs used in the Andal pujai are taken from 'Andal Thiruppavai'. The Thiruppavai is one of the best known and most used parts of the Nalayira prabandham. This portion is written by the famous Tamil poetess, Andal.

After this the actual procession began to move out of the temple to the street. First, they formed in six lines. When they came out from the temple they were only twenty in number but soon more children joined the procession. Children alone were fifty in number. Included in the fifty were seven girls. Seven grown up people were also in the procession. Thus they formed six lines without having any definite number to each line. In the procession a girl of fourteen carried the photo of Andal. Another girl more or less of the same age, carried the oil lamp. In the back a grown up man stood with an harmonium. He was supposed to be the leader of the group. All other members of the group walked in the middle. The man started singing and playing his harmonium. By that song the procession slowly moved. One thabala and ten cymbals added beauty to the song. We walked by the side of the procession.

The procession at first stopped in front of a house near the temple. An aged woman came out from the house with a brass basin containing one coconut, a bottle containing oil, a brass cup containing water and incense. The woman handed over the basin to the girl who held the

lamp. The girl placed the lamp on the floor and poured the oil into the lamp. By that time the woman poured the water from the cup on the floor in front of the lamp and put a quarter anna coin in the basin of the lamp. Then she knelt before the lamp thrice. Then the girl took some carbon particles from the lamp with her finger, and applied to the forehead of the woman. After that, the girl broke the coconut by striking it on the ground. The kernal of the coconut was placed in the basin. This was used at the end of the ritual. Then seven children and a grown up man circled round the photo and sang a song, and went about circulating round the photo singing and dancing for about five minutes. By that time the girl lighted an oil soaked cotton cloth and placed it in the basin and then handed over the basin to the woman. Then she lighted the incense and placed on the photo. In the meanwhile, the girl garlanded the Andal photos with a wreath of flowers, brought by the woman. After finishing all these, tea and sweets were served to all the members of the procession by the householders. After the tea the procession moved to other streets. During the whole procession of the day it stopped thus in front of eight Tamil houses and the same ritual was repeated with light refreshments at the end. As the procession was moving along various streets of the locality it was stopped by some Tamils residing in those streets who gave their offerings and worshipped Andal. Whenever such people came with the intention of worshipping Andal, the procession stopped for a moment, and after the worshipper bowed before Andal, the girl who held the lamp applied some oil with some carbon from the lamp to the forehead of the person who put some coins in the basin of the oil lamp. After that the procession moved forward with songs. By the time the procession had moved along seven streets, covering about 2½ miles, forty-four people put coins in the lamps and bowed before Andal. On the way back to the temple the procession stopped in front of another temple and lighted a lamp in front of that temple. Then it moved on and reached the temple (puja place) from which it started at 6.30 a.m. They say that it is not proper to pass any temple without paying respect to the God in that temple.

All the members of the procession entered the temple. The girls placed the photo on a raised platform, and the lamp was placed in front of the photo. Then all sat down and sang a song of praise. All this time a bell was rung by a girl. After that each person knelt before the idol of the divinity and photo of Andal. A spoon full of sugar water was served. Each person received the water in his folded hand and drank with due respect and reverence. Then coconut kernal was served. This also they accepted in their folded hands reverently and ate. After that they sat silently for some moments. Then they slowly went out one by one. Thus the Andal puja ended at 7.5 a.m. All the coins and the lamp were collected by the pujari, about Re 1.50.

The songs used during the procession are verses taken from 'Thiruppavai' written by the great poetess Andal. Three persons used small Tamil books containing those verses, which are as follows:

TRANSLATION

1. This is a beautiful full-moon night of Margali (month of December -January)
Will you go and bathe, you young women, all
Ye maidens bent on your vow?
For all the world to praise, the son of the divinity
He with the body dark, red with passion and affection, with face like to the rays of sun and moon.
He is the supreme God
He will freely grant us the drum. Hail, unique lady!

2. Hear, dwellers of the world,
The deeds we must do to keep our vow:
At the feet of the supreme lord we should sing.
He is sleeping upon the snake on the sea of milk.
We should bathe early in the morning.
We should neither eat ghi nor milk nor paint our eyes with black.
We will not do unfit deeds and not speak evil words
We will give kind alms and be happy in this manner. Hail, unique lady!

3. If we sing the name of the supreme
Who measured the mighty world,
Each month three rains will fall all over the land.
No harm will happen to the people.
There will be plentiful irrigation.
Fields will be covered with beautiful lily buds
Generous cows shall flood the bowels with milk.
Unfailing wealth shall fill the land. Hail unique lady!

4. When we all come pure, strewing fair flowers, with songs of adoration on our lips,
Meditating on him in our hearts,
The mysterious one (divinity) who was born in Madura
Who played in the river Jamuna,
Who is the lamp of the shepherd caste, will appear
He will cause to ease the faults past, and faults
To come, like a cotton within the fire. Hail unique lady!

5. Hast thou not heard the songs of the birds?
Heard the deep sounding of conches in the shrine of the God?
Child wilt thou not arise?
Sages and Yogis have risen meditating;
Him who killed the enemy (who came to poison the divinity with her milk)
And destroyed the Demon in the form of a cart,
He is resting on a great serpent;
Rejoice on the Lord's name. Hail, unique lady!

6. Hast not thou heard sounds of birds every where!
Hast not thou heard curing butter milk?
While maids with fragrant hair toss from side to side
Child to the maidens' queen?
Still dost thou lie, when thou hast heard the song
To him, to the divinity?
Oh thou mistress, open I pray! Hail unique lady!

7. Cousin, on drowsy cushions fast asleep
In brightly jewelled hall, with lamp alight
And incense rising. Now unloose the bars
Of thy shining door! O aunt of mine,
Wilt thou not rouse him?
Is thy daughter dumb? or does he lie in deep sleep,
While aloud we cry,
Calling his thousand names. Hail unique lady!

8. Thou who carest for the herds gently,
Thou who wert mighty in fight to destroy the foes,
Thou who art fair as a serpent and bright as a peacock,
All thy girl friends come from every side and crowd thy courts
To sing the name of a cloud coloured divinity
Ah! Still thou speakest not.
What is the meaning of this sleep of thine? Hail unique lady.

9. O! wealthy lady who possesses milking cows,
Dew falling on our heads.
At thy gate we sing for our heart's darling,
Who in anger killed Ravana in the south,
But thou remainest dumb; still thou are not rising
What a great sleep is this! Hail unique lady!

10. How within your garden the lilies blossom!
The flowers are seen dressed in their proper colours.
Many flowers have gone to the temple to hear the conch sound,
O' lady, thyself art not yet risen.
All tongues! we sing to him who bears in
His great hands the conch and discus and whose eyes are like a lotus.
Hail unique lady!

11. 'Young parrot, dearest, art thou sleeping yet?
'Be still' call me no more, ye girls; I come
'Thy promises of old we know, come
Quickly, we have all come; thou too must come
And count thyself among our band and sing
Of him who is mighty to destroy foes,
The mysterious lord. Hail unique lady!

12. Gate keeper of the Lord's house, the
Guard of the gate, open the big gates,
Yesterday the Lord of mystery promised a drum for us young shepherd girls to beat.
We have come in our purity,
That we may sing to rouse him from his sleep.
Please do not deny us our purpose,
But open the well-barred door. Hail unique lady!

13. O Deity, who givest us food and clothing
O our lady arise, sleep not
Awake, awake king of the Gods, who pierced the sky, and measured out the worlds.
Arise, dear lad, who wears golden anklets and who sleepest with thy young brother. Hail unique lady!

VI

14. Thou who art strong to make them brave in fight
Going before the three and thirty gods,
Thou who art just mighty, faultless,
Who burnest up thy foes, awake from sleep
O Lady with tender breasts like cups
With red lips, awake and wake up thy
Bridegroom. Hail unique lady!

15. Son of the mighty lord of fruitful cows
Thou who possessest knowledge, Lord of strength
Thou great one, thou the sun arise from sleep.
Before thy strength all foes flee away.
Come humbly to thy gate, so that
We may adore at thy feet and
We may all sing out praises. Hail unique lady!

16. Like before the great monarchs,
We with broken pride crowd to thee in great company,
Wilt not thy red eyes, like the sun and the moon,
Open little by little on us, like lotus flowers?
If thou wilt glance at us with thy two eyes,
The curse that rests upon us is removed. Hail unique lady!

17. Thou who art like a flower come graciously from thy shrine of cunning craftsmanship.
In grace come, and search out the cause
That brings us here.
Thou who art a fire we come longing after thee,
If thou givest the drum, then we will sing
Thy bounty mighty along with thy consort.
And all our trouble gone, we will rejoice, Hail unique lady!

18. O Sir, even thy foes sing thee praise. Such is thy nobility.
Many a jewel we put on—bracelets
Armlets, anklets.
We wear very beautiful robes
We cast plenteous meals of rice, milk curds
In company with thee, what bliss! Hail unique lady!

19. How great the boon we have that thou wast among us,
O Lord! Thou lackest nothing,
Yet this kinship that we have with thee here never ceases,
Out of our love we call thee with baby names,
We are not worthy of thy grace,
Like children we do not know.
Wilt thou not grant us the drum we ask? Hail unique lady!

20. At early morning we come to ask the boon
And offer our praises at thy lotus feet.
It is not fit that thou withdraw rejecting our service
O Lord! We have become thy slaves,
Only to thee we will give our service,
From us remove all other loves. Hail unique lady!

Now we shall turn to the final day celebration of the Andal Puja held on January 13, 1958, from 10 p.m., to the next morning at 5.45 a.m.

The puja began exactly at 10 p.m., by singing an Hindi song. At the beginning there were only 10 men in the temple, among them one was a blind man and he was using the harmonium when singing. He was the leader of the party for the music. One thabala and ten cymbals were used along with a harmonium for music. In the midst of the music a conch was blown by a man. This music went on till 12.30 p.m. Then they stopped and had a cup of tea. After half an hour rest all people sat in a semi-circle and sang classical Tamil songs from Thiruppavai as given above. At that time the priest of the temple came near the raised platform and put a curtain in front of it. Then he entered behind the curtain and began the *holy bath*. A small brass metal image (statue) of the divinity was taken out from a glass almira. Then he placed it in a big wash basin and applied some oil over it, and then washed it with soap and water, using a basin. After washing it a red velvet-like jacket was twisted round the lower half of the image. Then a blue velvet-like cloth was curled round the neck of the image. The image was about 6 inches in height. Then the image was garlanded with small flower garlands. By that time the conch was blown thrice. After that the Andal image was taken out from the platform and placed on the left side of the divinity's idol. Then followed the ritual marriage by tying a small yellow thread around neck of the image of Andal showing that the divinity was marrying Andal. Conch blowing was going on during the whole ceremony. The Andal image was also then garlanded. Then the priest removed the curtain. At that time, the

conch was again blown and the bell was rung for a few minutes. Then the priest placed in front a metal plate containing coconut, some oranges, and some plantains. He placed a lighted oil lamp in front of it. All these time the singing was continued. The people stopped at 2.30 a.m., for rest and tea. At 3.30 a.m. the priest again came forward and put up the curtain. He placed the image of Andal and the divinity over the raised platform. Then he lighted some incense and placed a plate full of sweet rice flour in front of it. During all this time the other people were singing the songs. Then he distributed the flowers on the table to all people. All people stood up and began to sing a song. The conch was blown for a long time, the temple bell was rung. People sang with a new enthusiasm. The priest waved burning camphor seven times around the divinity and Andal, repeating some hymns in a low voice, and ringing the hand bell with his left hand. After that people threw flowers in front of the image of Andal and the divinity. The song and the bell continued about 22 minutes. Thus it was supposed that the ritual marriage of Andal and the divinity took place and worshippers paid their devotion to the god and goddess. At 4.50 a.m., the priest gave some sugar water to each person (a spoon full). Each person received in his folded hand and drank it reverently. Then he handed over the cup and the spoon to another man to give him this sugar water. He also received it reverently. After this one by one all came forward near the altar and knelt before the platform thrice; some people lay down in the front and remained there two or three minutes. Then they got up and bowed thrice turning left and right. Then the priest went round by bringing a lighted oil lamp before each person. Some people put one anna and others a quarter anna in the lamp. All touched the fire with both of their hands and then passed the hand over the face. Among the 41 persons assembled, ten were children (four girls and six boys). The rest were grown up men.

After this there was a tea party. The main items were purry and currey, channa, plantain, orange, coconut kernel, pudding and a metal cup of tea. Some ate and others took to their homes. After the party the function ended at 5.45 a.m.

For the morning puja they used eight verses from the hymns of Periyalvar that are given in the book, *Nityanushtanam.*

1. Reverence, reverence be unto thee,
   O! thou mighty one, who destroyed the demons.
   Thou art like to the saphire in glory
   We bless the beauty of thy holy feet
   For a thousand years for crores of years and forever.

2. Oh may no rift come between thy slaves and thee.
   All hail to Srimati who dwells on thy right in luster.
   All hail the glorious discus in thy fair right hand.
   All hail to panchagavyam the conch sounding in the fight.

3. Seven generations without flaw, we
Sing 'All hail' to him who slew the demons of Ceylon with his army
Before we to the evil world go,
O Lord, come to join us to break the bonds of this world.

4. Oh join the devotees who sing the names
Of Narayan. Sing constantly
Till town and country resound with your song.
O! come all at his time and sing his
Thousand names who slew demons and
Giants. Leave the past and proclaim anew.

5. Lord, when we called thyself, thou
Madest us free and we have prospered
To thee who didst break the bow in Mathura
And danced on the five hooded serpents head,
We say all hail.

6. Those who repeat the words of God's song
Saying bow to God,
Those who praise the lord in high heaven.
Shall prosper and feel their luck this year.

7. Even in our old age when we need
Support of staff, and even before we
Are double bent, sitting down to rest
We would worship Him
Who sucked his feigned mothers breast till she died.

8. Him who the hooded snakes dread as foe,
Eagle as standard bearer,
And even me, he makes pure in life.
With sweets, rice, ghee, betel in hand, with
Unceasing rite we will hail thee.

There were three other songs which were not in the book that were used for the Bhajan.

1. Victory to the divinity who sooths
the heart and to the enemy of demons.
Victory to the divinity who inflicted upon
the serpent, who slew the demon.
Victory to the divinity who always uses golden
Yellow clothes, and who plays flute sweetly.
Victory to him who played with the
Milkmaids and who helped the devotees in
their troubles and needs.

2. My Lord the divinity, I pray give me thy vision,
Thou hast been born as the son of a goddess.
But hast been nursed by another.
Thou hast lived in the temples
That were the hearts of the milkmaids.
O! Lord! Oh divinity, I am helpless
And a poor wanderer in this world.
If I see thy face that radiates light
Of love and beauty, I shall be comforted.

3. O great God who lieth on the great serpent over the milksea
God who cannot be contained in the
whole universe, arise at this morning and bless us.
O great God who hath created the
whole world and protected it.
God who cannot be contained in the
whole universe, arise at this morning hour
and bless us.

O great God who hath taken ten incarnations to punish the wicked
and save the Good.
God who cannot be contained in the whole universe, arise at this
morning hour and bless us.

O great God whose left breast is
Glorified by the presence of thy consort.
God who cannot be contained in the whole universe,
arise at this morning hour and bless us.

The whole worship is centred round the main idea of how to please God. To please God they bathe him, they wave light around him, they light incense before him, they give sweetmeats to him, they prostrate before him and sing songs in his name.

THE MID-INDIA REGION

Dr Henry H. Presler

Note: This regular feature in The India Cultures Quarterly is contributed by the director of the Department of Organized Research of Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, M.P., India, who assumes that a regional approach to the study of Indian cultures is required by the diverse data. Wide variations in patterns of relationships, ideas, customs, and artefacts are reported in the anthropological journals. Dr Presler is confining his attention to an urban section close to the geographic centre of the peninsula. Historically, Jabalpur was early the locale of aboriginal tribes secluded in its hills and forests. Later Moslems acquired dominance. In the British period Aryans from the north immigrated, along with agricultural populations from Bundelkhand and Chattisgarh districts of the province. Recently, various educational, industrial, and military establishments have attracted populations from the four corners of India, but these remain culturally distinct from the main body of mid-India, remote, isolated, unsophisticated illiterates that comprise the majority in the city's population of three hundred thousand (approximate).

Experiments with Oral Myths

In a previous issue I said: The subject of oral mythology forces itself upon the attention of any student of the illiterate masses, comprising at least 85 per cent of the population of India. Their ideologies, theologies, world-view . . . their customs, codes of etiquette, expectations . . . . their morals, rules, laws, their needs, fears, hopes . . . in sum, their interpretations of life (religions) are embodied in oral myths.

By myth I mean a traditional story of religious import, dealing chiefly with the activities of supernatural beings. The merit of this definition is that it does not raise any question about the truth involved. Whether a myth be true or false is an important consideration for each of us in the role of the theologian or philosopher. But as social scientists, we are interested in cause and effect relationship, and in such knowledge as yields dependable prediction.

From various oral myths I here confine my attention to those pertaining to competition, rivalry, struggle, trials of strength, conflict.

A myth classified as an Actualization is one that presumes to report a competition between humans. Such a competition was an actuality. The persons were real, the struggle was visible and audible. Anybody present could have seen or heard it. Whether or not the reported details are accurate is not a question in the mind of the informant.

He describes what happened on earth in space and time, the rivalries of human agencies.

A competitive myth described as a Symbolization is one that lifts into a non-human sphere what actually happened on earth as between humans. The supra-mundane sphere becomes the mirror of the mundane. The names of the supra-mundane actors may be different; their attributes may be exalted; their powers are usually greater; but the drama played by them above, had its original form in some struggle between men below. The heavenly plot is a replica of the earthly, a *chinn* in Hindi, a *nishan* in Urdu, a symbol in English.

A competitive myth described as a Projection, is one that abstracts the competitive behaviour of men and foists that pattern on the gods. Such a myth makes the gods struggle with one another as men compete with their fellows. Ideal-typically, it is not possible to connect the plot in heaven with any historically verifiable conflict on earth. The details of the supernatural story cannot be matched by details in any natural tale. Rather, the normal course of human competition, a type sequence, a norm of conflict is projected heavenward, and there the play is cast with available divinities.

In sum, these oral myths of competition are to be categorized as Actualizations, Symbolizations, and Projections. In other words, the oral myths are classified according to their distance from a human scene. The Actualization is the human scene; the Symbolization is a duplication of the human scene in an other-than-human realm; the Projection takes the essence of the human scene and places it on a cosmic canvas, to be exaggerated and embellished by the previously known characteristics of divine actors.

So far in this series we have been concerned only with competitive myths as Actualizations. Such descriptions were subdivided into the following:

1. Competition between people and the police.
2. Competition between political factions.
3. Competition between magicians.
4. Competition between religious functionaries and the laity.
5. Competition between religious functionaries.

Because information about magic is difficult to obtain, it is important to examine whatever has been shared. Therefore, I add here another oral myth pertaining to competition between magicians.

In this tale the struggle is between a woman knowing *tona vidya* (a kind of magic knowledge which is harmful in its effects, i.e., black magic), and a man who knows *jhar phoonk* (a kind of magic to counteract tona vidya, i.e., white magic. *Jhar* is a term derived from *jharna*, to sweep. The people say, 'Just as we clean our floor by sweeping it with a broom, so this magic sweeps away the tona vidya.' The word *phoonk* is from *phoonkna*, to blow, and is applicable to this white magic because the mantras or spells are whispered into the space before his mouth by the magician, and then blown through the air at the target,

i.e., the adversely affected person. Sometimes the mantras are whispered on to small pebbles that are thrown at the person, striking him. The person is glad to be hit by these pebbles, for at the moment of impact the spells leave the pebbles and neutralize the tona vidya spells infecting his person). As many common people live in fear of tona vidya, and tell myths confirming in their minds its dire effect, they think hopefully of being rescued by jhar phoonk. Any myth which guarantees to them the superiority of the latter, is a genuine comfort. The following partially counteracts the dread of tona vidya.

Tona Vidya vs. Jhar Phoonk

A woman in village X (about thirty miles from Hinditown) killed a man with tona vidya. She was a Gond. Gonds are skilled in these matters. The man whom she killed is an Ahir (shepherd), but he knows jhar phoonk for counteracting tona vidya, and he got the best of her. It was like this:

The woman knew that he could perform jhar phoonk, and determined to match her art against his. So she went to him and asked, 'Do you fear anything?' He replied, 'Only a bird in the field that flies up suddenly and startles me'. So she watched the path along which he customarily passed with his cattle, and seeing him approaching, made some pellets of clay and filled them with her mantras. As he drew near, the pellets suddenly changed into birds and flew up unexpectedly. He was frightened and badly affected. The mantras from the birds went into his body. Soon he got fever and turned back home. There he said, 'It is that Gond woman with her tona vidya. I will die. But never mind. Dig a grave for me; don't burn me. Put two bottles of water at my feet and two bottles of wine at my head. Also procure my Diwali (an important festival for two socially elevated religions in our area) dress used by me when dancing ceremonially. (His dress consists of bells around the waist, peacock feathers, cowrie shells fastened to a jacket, and anklets). The afflicted man said, 'Put my dress near my grave, and dig the grave shallow, not deep. Moreover, let four men (whom this jhar phoonk expert named) climb up the trees close by and hide themselves in such a way that nobody can see them from the earth, but so that they can see my grave throughout the night.' Then he died and his friends followed the instructions to the letter.

About midnight the four men in the tree saw the Gond woman coming, stark naked. She was carrying a *soorahi* (water pot) on her head. She put the pot on the ground and uncovered the corpse. By her tona vidya she made him alive. She asked, 'Do you admit my tona vidya is stronger than your jhar phoonk and will you follow me?' He answered, 'Yes, but on one condition: that you allow me first to do my Diwali dance. This business of dying has interfered with my dancing, as it has happened just at Diwali time.' She agreed and freed him temporarily from her mantras. He put on his Diwali dress, took up his flute and began to play it. She beat his drums for him.

As he danced, he approached and offered her a bottle of wine, holding one of water in his other hand. She thought the contents were identical and drank hers, but he drank only water. After dancing some more he offered her the second bottle of wine, and himself drank the second bottle of water. So she

became drunk, and he threw his jhar phoonk mantras upon her. Thus, she was rendered inoperative. Then he took his *prsa* (a kind of ax) and cut off her head. Her body fell to one side and her head to the other side, but the latter jumped up and reattached itself so that she lived. He struck her a second time, severing the neck, and this time caught her head and hung it on a tree. Then he called the four men down, and with them went to the village. There he lived for seventeen years before dying. From this event we can know that tona vidya and jhar phoonk are powerful.

The last sentence was, of course, the conclusion of the informant. The myth shows also that black magic was overcome only by a combination of trickery and white magic, leaving the impression that actually the black is stronger than the white. I believe this impression to be general among our people, and hence the importance attached to the *gunia* or functionary of jhar phoonk. He must be a man informed as to white magic, and also exceedingly clever in order to prevail. In the foregoing myth the gunia admits that he has to die; his mantras cannot ward off that affliction. Therefore, he does not choose to stage a pitched battle between his white mantras and the black mantras, which could only end in defeat to the white. Instead, he out-thinks his antagonist. He knows she cannot avoid the temptation to revive him in order to gloat over her victory. In this competitive field of magic, triumph is sweet. In the end, he wins by making her intoxicated to the point where she cannot use her superior black magic.

This myth of competition indicates the plight of the believer who knows no magic at all; he is struck by black magic, and can only turn helplessly and hopefully to the gunia to save him. The outcome of the struggle depends upon the knowledge and astuteness of the contending magicians, his fate hanging in the balance.

I turn now from struggles between magicians themselves, to struggle between the laity and the unwanted tona vidya magicians. It is not surprising that ordinary men should wish to rid themselves of those whom they consider to be tormentors. Not knowing white magic (which is, in any case, weaker than black) they have only two options: Either they can elude the tormenting magicians, or eliminate them. The following myths show how laymen escaped from the unequal struggle by eluding the magicians.

How the Robbers Eluded the Magicians

In Bengal many, many people know and practise magic. When I was just a child, the fame of Bengal magic was impressed upon my mind. In that province you can find all sorts of magic. For example, if someone steals your things, you can go to some magicians there, and report the theft. If that magician is not suspicious of you, and if he is in a good mood to do his work, and if he wants to help a deserving robbed person, then he can take a piece of glass or a mirror, as suits him. He will perform his magic rites over that glass, and then ask you to look into it. You will see the thief sitting, standing, or sleeping.

Into whatever part of the world the thief may have gone, he cannot escape from showing his face and body in the mirror of the magician. Even if the thief locks himself in a room with seven locks, still the magician can show you the culprit inside such a house so difficult of entrance.

Further, if the magician wants, he can call that thief to the place where you and the magician are sitting. But there are many things which can prevent this. The most important is that in Bengal, the thieves also know how to take the help of magicians. So they in advance engage some stronger magician on their side, so that their magic cancels the magic of your magician who is trying to bring the thief back to you. In such a competition, the magician whose mantras are weaker, is in a dangerous position. This is one of the reasons why magicians will not agree to bring the thief to you. Of course, they can show you who the robber is.

I will tell you how two robbers outwitted the magicians by another ruse. They wanted to rob a certain bank, and hired a car, driving up to the building. They went inside and produced a false cheque of many thousands, of rupees, and along with it, took out their pistols, saying, 'We have our car outside, and can easily escape from the police. If you shout you will be killed. If you would live, *take the money yourself* and come with us. The poor fellow *himself* took the money tremblingly, and sat in the car of the robbers. The robbers did not touch the money. The bank treasurer, the money, and robbers departed from the city in the automobile.

So the police and the bank president consulted the magicians. The magicians took their glasses and mirrors and did their mantras over them. When the police looked into the mirrors, they saw the bank treasurer sitting in a car with the money in his lap, because he was the one who had actually taken the money.

The robbers let some time elapse because they knew that the magicians would be employed to reveal the person absconding with the cash. When they judged that the authorities had been shown this information by the magicians, what did they do? They stabbed the treasurer to death and threw him in a water tank. Then the robbers took the money and went to their hiding place.

Every magician had said, 'The money was not stolen, but is with the owner of the money.' Then later the magicians said, 'The owner of the money has gone with the men who drove the car, but those men did not steal the money. Now either the bank treasurer is with those men, or perhaps he has died.'

By this ruse the thieves eluded the powers of the magicians, and managed to escape being identified in the mirrors.

These myths of competition between magicians themselves, and between the laity and magicians, are considered here as Actualizations, or descriptive accounts of struggles between humans on earth. They display the skill and astuteness required to overcome a superior adversary, and the trick of eluding him whom one cannot defeat. This pattern of matching wits with the opponent, or escaping from him altogether, will be shown later to be operating in myths of the supra-

mundane realm, so that competition on earth becomes the format for competition in places other than the earth. Thus, the whole complex of oral myths may be seen as one consistent whole. In presenting this thesis, I am proceeding from the known (the earth), to the unknown (places apart from the earth), from natural men to supernatural beings.

The other option before ordinary men who are ignorant of the mantras and so victims of the troublesome magicians, is simply to liquidate the practioners. In the following oral myth, competition reaches the extreme of warfare.

A proof of the power of the magicians was given to the Britishers during their government here. They soon learned that these Gond women had magic power, and determined to test them. They went hunting for birds with these women and said, 'Let us see you bring down these birds as can be done with our guns.' By their mantras the women were able easily to bring down the birds dead out of the air. So the Britishers were nervous about such women, and they caught hold of them and put them in their ships. Then they sank those ships and the women went to the bottom of the ocean. Then those men went throughout India catching such, and they drowned all of them. By this means many were destroyed. This is why there are fewer nowadays. In Bengal, Cuttack and Chattisgarh they can still be found. If it had not been for the *mukudums* (village leaders) and *patwars* (village land officers) in their employ, the British could not have caught so many. You see, the Gond women soon learned of the British policy against them and refused to admit their powers. But the mukudums and patwars betrayed them and gave them over to the Britishers. [1]

Later in this series we shall watch this extreme of liquidation in the heavenly regions where the oral myth becomes a Symbolization or a Projection.

We turn from magic competitors to the fourth category of Actualizations, namely to competition between religious functionaries and the laity. The myth below centers in religious rivalry between statuses.

How the High Status People Resented Low Status Piety

There was a postman living here, who was not a high caste. He and his wife were devout worshippers of gods and goddesses. He had gone on many pilgrimages, and even used to wear a sacred thread, and put *chandan* (sandalwood) paste in three vertical lines on his forehead. He visited many temples in this city, and attended religious functions. He was regular in worshipping at his home shrine. At present we do not see his images, but this is the *sthan* or sacred location for them.

The couple had to leave this house due to the resentment of their neighbours. They used to arise early in the morning to greet the sun. Then the wife

[1] It hardly needs remarking that this myth is not credited by any of us; we do not claim that myth needs to be historical.

would apply cow dung to the sthan, and the husband would take his ceremonial bath. They would both be seated before their images, and would begin to sing songs softly in praise of the gods and goddesses. He would apply sandal-wood paste to the images, offer flowers, rice and Nerbudda water, finishing by lighting incense sticks. All this would take 45 to 50 minutes.

In his conversation with us he would say, 'Some day I shall go to another realm, and thus I should do what is right; otherwise the Deity will be angry with me.' Sometimes he would quote from our scriptures.

But the people here would exclaim, 'Look at this low status fellow making out to be religious!' Others would abuse them in their hearing, 'See that man and woman? Their original caste is X, but they are trying to behave like Y caste.' Another would say, 'They are a proud couple, reserved and aloof from us. We are not religious enough for them'. The young men would say, 'Those people are stark mad. Look at them!'

So, in consequence, that couple moved away and we do not know where they have gone. Since then nobody around here worships at this shrine. They took their images with them.

The foregoing oral myth emphasises my hypothesis, to wit: There is a continuum in oral mythology, extending from the actual behaviour of men in the world to the behaviour of unseen beings in unseen realms, and that the behavioural patterns of the latter are to some extent projections of the former. The story of piety vs. status rivalry just narrated, falls at the this-world end of the continuum. In local oral mythology we find status rivalries between the unseen beings at the other end of the continuum.

In the foregoing myth, the superior caste is considered to be the proper religious functionary, and to set the standard in all religious activities. The display of piety by the inferior caste was interpreted as competition against a vested privilege.

Another oral myth illustrating the competition for religious dominnance between the religious functionary and the laity, is poignantly told in the following account. The religious functionary is the bride and the laity is represented by the irate bridegroom. The bride has been an ecstatic in her own village, one who goes into an abnormal behavioural state during which she speaks as a medium for the divinity.

When B married, he brought his wife to his parents' home to live, as is the custom with his caste. She brought with her the image of the divinity of her own village, as was the custom of her people. She set up her image inside the house and arranged the sacred utensils in a nice way. Her husband said he did not know her god, and that the god of this household was so and so. After a few days she began to act strangely, and shortly went into ecstacy. Then she began to speak the words of her god, which were: 'I am such and such a god and all members of this household must worship me.' After she came back to her normal mind, her husband exclaimed, 'I worship the god of my fathers. How can I worship your god? We people never worshipped such as you have brought here'. In considerable wrath he took her god outside the house and set

it under a tree. Also, he took all her sacred things and put them under the tree. And so they remain here, after fifty years. He and his wife are grandparents now and this is the situation still. She gets ecstacy and communicates what her god wants said, but he pays no attention to her.

Obviously, the two gods in the foregoing have become symbols of the competition between the sexes for dominance in the new family. An all too human struggle influences the choice of supernatural symbols.

In the next oral myth the competition between the laity and the religious functionary is sharp enough to issue in more than ridicule.

These sadhus have great power. You see, a naked sadhu once came to this city. He was clad only in his skin. As he passed through the streets of the bazaar, some people began to laugh at him, but he remained quiet. Then the younger children, taking the cue, started to throw stones at him. Still he remained unperturbed. This drew a crowd and many people, surrounding him, began to cut jokes. He became irritated but still did no harm to them. Seeing his discomfort, the crowd increased its torment. So the sadhu stopped and called upon his Deity, exclaiming, 'O Deity, take care of them'. At that moment the sky, which had been clear until then, darkened and immediately rain began to fall. The sadhu prayed, 'O Deity, give them what they deserve!' Immediately pieces of ice began to fall out of the sky, and hit the people. So they all had to scatter. When all departed, the sky cleared and the sadhu proceeded on his way. Many people understood that it was the power of the sadhu that did this, and they thereafter left him strictly alone.

Our next category is competition between religious functionaries. Notice that in this series the arrangement of myths is from the secular to the sacred (first, competition between secular humans; second competition between secular and sacred humans, then competition between sacred humans; and so on towards the competition between supernatural beings).

One day religious leader A who was older, began to envy religious leader B because of the later's wonderful powers. So he took the iron *tirsul* (trident) usually carried by him, and fixed it upright in the ground. Then he called B and in front of all, made that iron tirsul to grow rapidly until it was big like a tree. A climbed to the top of it and sat on one of the points, from which he called down in triumph, 'Oh, B! Come up here beside me. Take your perch on the opposite point of this tirsul.' In reply, B took a piece of thread out of his garment and threw it toward the sky. That thread stood erect on the ground, and extended toward the clouds. B climbed up that thread, much higher than A, and sat there. He called to A, 'Oh, A! You come up here beside me on this thread'. But A could not do that, and was thus defeated before the people.

This myth symbolizes the real rivalry between two competing sects existing today, and justifies one in its feeling of superiority over the other.

Rivalry between religious functionaries may start when one of the two is a disciple of the other.

C was the disciple of D, and D became jealous of his powers. So one day before all the people the *guru* (teacher) challenged his *chela* (disciple), saying: 'After all, what can you do for me?' C, the disciple, caught hold of his own *choti* (the few hairs in the top of a disciple's head allowed to remain after shaving the head. The choti is a tuft of hairs in one spot, like a tassel). C pulled and pulled until he pulled off his own entire sheath of skin, and then stood there skin-less. He handed the choti with the attached skin to his teacher.

The teacher pretended to be very pleased with the gift, and praised the disciple before all. Then he returned the gift and said, 'Oh C! I cannot accept your skin. Wear it again.' So C did just that; he put his skin back on himself and was as before.

But the incident shamed the teacher, and unable to endure the thought of appearing before the public after such an exhibition of inferiority, ran away. The teacher went to the Realm of Women (where only women are living and all men are forbidden). If any man dared to attempt an entrance, the women soldiers would kill him. The teacher thought that if he could arrive within that kingdom, no man, particularly his disciple, could see him ever again, and thus the painful memory need never arise in his mind. D, the teacher, had power no doubt, and by it he was able to get past the soldiers and to reach the palace of the Queen of the Realm of Women. That queen fell in love with D and married him. So D felt securely hidden at last.

However, C, the disciple, set out in search of D. He wandered through the three worlds but could not find trace of him. So he thought D must be in the Realm of Women. On reaching the border of that queendom, the soldiers shot their arrows at him, but to no avail. His power turned aside all darts and spears. He walked calmly past the soldiers and proceeded to the palace, finding D.

The religiously charged remarks of C were so potent that D felt impelled to return home again, to face the situation. He left his new wife and children and everything except one piece of gold. D put that gold in a bag. *En route* home, feeling obliged to go aside on a private occasion, the teacher handed the bag to his disciple to hold for him. C perceived the bag to be heavy, and on investigating, threw the piece of gold into the well. D noticed the bag had become light in weight and challenged C, who said, 'I am very sorry to know that you love such a chunk of gold, which is not fit for a religious teacher. Gold is no better than stone'. The teacher was not convinced at this evaluation, so C proceeded to urinate on some stones by the roadside, which immediately turned into gold. D became very much ashamed at this, and renounced his love of gold, and confessed openly the superiority of his chela over himself.

This myth is told by the members of one sect today, to justify their claim to superiority over another rival sect.

The following tale is more complicated in that two rival teachers are displaced by a third competitor.

Long ago there were two sects that were rivals. Each differed from the other and looked with contempt on everything pertaining to the other. They had different *sindhur* (vermillion) and chandan (sandalwood) marks on their foreheads. While relations were severely strained among them, a third religious teacher came. He did not say anything about the form or the shape of the forehead marks. He only mentioned that there should be a mark. The people were tired of the disputing and listened to him gladly. The third teacher thereupon wrote a scripture and sang it to the people, who were charmed by it. They went over to the third teacher by thousands. This brought the first and second leaders of the rival sect together in opposition to the interloper. Number 3 faced their combined opposition resourcefully and manfully. To confound the first leader, he took his scripture into the temple of the divinity of the first party, and locked it inside the sanctuary. He himself then stood outside and said, 'If No. 1 divinity is a divinity, he will surely give his signature to my scripture to prove his godhood. After sometime, he opened the door of the temple, and found the sign of No. 1 divinity on the last page of the new scripture.

Then No. 2 sect was pleased with the defeat of No. 1 by No. 3 and again revolted saying that the new scripture was not theirs. So, No. 3 went to the temple of No. 2 divinity, the crowd of people at his heels. He put his new scripture before the statue of No. 2 divinity and prayed to him saying, 'If thou art the true divinity, reveal this moment thy truth by replacing the sign of No. 1 divinity with thy own sign.'

After some time it was seen by No. 3 leader and the crowd that in place of No. 1 sign, the sign of No. 2 appeared. No. 3 held this triumph aloft and exclaimed, 'The divinity of No. 1 group is the same as for No. 2 group and both have put their seal on my scriptures in obedience to me. So it is that this scripture of No. 3 is the scripture for all members of our religion, and No. 3 has become the acknowledged superior among all religious teachers.

In the foregoing notice that we keep all myths strictly anonymous, not being interested so much in names and identities as in mythological patterns. We desire, further, to protect our informants and to respect their statement.

This ends the section on the Actualizations, which are myths arising in the human scene. In a subsequent issue the theme will be pursued into other-worldy realms, where the reader may decide for himself whether the world of competing men sets the plots for the unseen beings.

(*To be continued*)

ASSIGNING RESEARCH DISCIPLINES

(With reference to Inquiries into Indian Cultures)

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In a previous paper[1] I have indicated the first step towards undertaking a research project pertaining to cultures in India, namely, the recognition of one's assumptions.

The second step consists in the assigning of the particular inquiry to a specific scholastic discipline. Under which branch of learning does the problem fall? Shall the investigation be classified under the Humanities, or under the Behavioural Sciences? The answer to this question of classification is sought in the second stage of research procedure.

In today's lecture I plead for the view that research on the same problem may be profitably pursued under either the humanities or the behavioural sciences, or both

Let me illustrate. At the moment, we are interested in Tamilian Sakti Cults in Jabalpur. First, we became partly conscious of our basic assumptions with respect to study thereof, and secondly, began asking ourselves how to classify the problem. Is this properly a philological problem? Is it an historical problem? Is it a philosophical problem? Or, a behavioural problem? If a philological problem, we could acquire a text in Sanskrit or Tamil and devote ourselves resolutely to analysis thereof. We might assign the problem to a person possessing a first class knowledge of Sanskrit or Tamil, and a knowledge of so-called 'lower criticism' of documents. We would expect him to provide an accurate translation. This assignment would yield one type of knowledge.

Or, we could classify this problem under history. We could place less stress on linguistics, and more stress on chronology. Not one, but all available scriptures relevant to Tamilian Sakti Cults could be read in the original or in translations, or both. The apparatus of 'higher criticism' of documents could be applied to their analysis, and the researcher would be expected to produce an evidential account of the changes in Tamilian Sakti doctrines through the centuries. This assignment would afford a different kind of knowledge.

[1] *Man in India*, 1949.

Or, we could view this problem under philosophy. The researcher could focus his attention on the ideology of sakti in the context of Indian philosophies, and endeavour to define and systematize its concepts and to test their validation. He would be a person skilled in metaphysics, formal logic, epistemology, ethics, and so forth. He would turn up a different sort of knowledge.

Again, we could examine whether the Jabalpur Tamilians have any significant acquaintance with the philological, documentary, historical, and ideological aspects of Tamilian Sakti as recorded in writing, and if not, ask whether this is more properly a problem related to oral tradition, to folkways, to rituals, to human relationships. As such, the problem would be investigated by a student oriented in the Behavioural Sciences, and so a fourth kind of knowledge would be revealed.

This perplexity as to how best to tackle the problem of Tamilian Sakti Cults in a Hindi language area illustrates a basic proposition:

Any problem in Indian culture may be profitably investigated by more than one scholastic discipline.

This reflection is so fundamental to research in Indian cultures, that we may pause over it.

Let us ruminate a while on the main proposition, namely, that there is more than one approach to a problem. We may all of us agree to this in theory, but to what extent are we prepared to act as if it be true? Who here is prepared to listen with respect to a research worker who approaches his domain from a different angle? My twenty years' experience in India has rendered me uncertain how to answer such embarrassing questions, at least with regard to Christian scholars. I am a member of an organization that has a high respect for the Behavioural Sciences, which happen to constitute my own sphere of specialization. Some of the members of this organization are unable to see sufficient value in the Humanities, and are prepared to delete from the curriculum well-established disciplines such as philology. When I insist upon the indispensability of philology to research, they stare at me and shake their heads sadly. This year I have been approached by travelling representatives of two American universities about the possibility of sending their postgraduates to our Department of Organized Research for a year of study. In each case I replied, 'We are not prepared to consider your query unless your students have a working knowledge of the vernacular in our area.' One or two of my colleagues think my answer was wrong. I think it was right, because linguistics are essential to any thorough understanding of the culture being observed. The Humanities are vital in research.

On the other hand, I have worked on committees with members of other organizations that stress the Humanities. Their tendency is to place a onesided emphasis upon the classics to the neglect of living people. These brethren have made notable contributions to our knowledge of the past; they have immersed their minds in important disciplines, and have, in consequence, acquired a set of mental habits.

They are sometimes unable to understand what the behavioural scientist is talking about; his concepts, categories and theories are somewhat unintelligible to them. They dismiss the important approach of the behavioural scientist with gestures of perplexity and impatience.

This divisiveness is unfortunate. There are, we must admit it, Christian scholars in India who have not yet risen to an interdepartmental view of knowledge. These gentlemen tend to debate the relative merits of various research disciplines, instead of welcoming discoveries from any source. They tend to treat other disciplines than their own with disdain, as if all other approaches to reality were of little consequence. Thus, a psychologist may look upon the philosopher as upon a musty antiquarian, bedeviling notions long since forgotten. The philosopher considers the social anthropologist as a misguided sport, dabbling in superstitious irrelevancies of absurd rituals. The historian avers that not one in a thousand knows what the philologist is arguing, and that the 999 proceed as if the rare grammatical form did not exist. The historian may think that the only knowledge worth considering is in terms of development, continuing a previous generation whose chief category was evolution, a concept which is anathema to a sociologist. The lamentable result is that research by Christians into, say, religions in India, is blocked by what I would call, 'departmentalism in knowledge,' my mutual antipathy between scholars, by clash of viewpoints, by efforts to minimize one another. All this simmers down to the question asked by the disciples, 'Lord, who is the greatest?'

So it happens that research problems are sometimes assigned to this or that field, because of prejudice.

Other research problems are assigned to other fields because the professors in charge understand those other fields. I have known learned men to have spent years in acquiring a specialist's command of one field; then because they could not grasp another field of inquiry after reading a few magazine articles, they rejected it outright as of no serious consequence. But, research problems can be profitably assigned to any one of several fields, each of which may yield valuable knowledge. To which field we do assign it, ought to be decided on grounds other than prejudice, or on insufficient acquaintance with the kinds of knowledge. I plead here for the view that research on the same problem may be profitably pursued under either the Humanities or the Behavioural Sciences, or by both.

Let us look at some of the shibboleths heard in India among Christian scholars who confess that there is only one research procedure under heaven by which men can learn.

First, there is the shibboleth of nationalism. When I first came to India there were many more English here than now, and for that matter, many more Americans. Of course, the English were in control of the educational decisions. I am sorry to recall that many an American rejected outright the English excellence in the Humanities, simply on the ground that it was English. Likewise, the English looked down their noses at the American interest in the Behavioural Sciences, which

they called with the damning epithet, 'another Americanism'. Well, the situation has changed for the better, with Indians making the educational decisions for Indians. It is for them to say whether research projects are being assigned on such prejudicial grounds now.

Second, there is the shibboleth of 'the facts.' Each branch of research into Indian Cultures—whether in the Humanities or in the Behavioural Sciences—claims that it is uncovering the 'facts,' accusing the other of speculating in ivory towers. Thus, the archeologist says he is digging up the 'real facts', whereas the historian is promulgating the errors of garbled documents. It is sobering to read the press notices of new books purporting to give us 'the facts'. The new translations of the Bible are supposed to be based on 'the facts', whereas the old ones, by inference, were not. The new books written by social anthropologists are presumed to give us 'the facts' about Indian religions, whereas the old books written by theologians, did not. The non-Christian scholars are following the same theme, stimulating this interest in social and religious 'facts.' What was formerly the chief concern of the Indian Census, the District Gazetter and the Government Survey, has become the province of our college and university professors. It is as if the old love of abstractions, so characteristic of Indian thought, were being rejected for the new love of 'facts'. Among Christian scholars, at least two parties are apparent: first, there are the younger men concerned only with the here and now, rushing hither and yon collecting the 'facts of the fast vanishing primitive life.' Secondly, there are the older men who believe that any contemporary study is shallow if not founded on a vertical knowledge through time, and who maintain the superiority of depth studies over surface studies. The younger men claim they have 'the facts', and the older men say they have 'the facts;' in consequence, the two parties cannot join forces for an open-minded, co-operative investigation of all possible facts.

Third, there is the shibboleth of 'superstition'. We had a post-graduate student assigned to studying the religion of a mobile community in Jabalpur. One day in a hotel lobby some of his fellow citizens gathered around him and said, 'Look here, you seem to be an intelligent fellow, and in your right mind. Tell us, have you nothing better to do than inquire into this religious business?' Well-educated Indians have stopped me in the street to say, 'We know you are wandering around harmlessly in our mohulla, looking here and there; but tell us, why are you wasting your time this way?' What is true in the hotel and in the street, is also true in the college. One professor says that another professor is making a study of irrelevancies. In one seminar they say that the professor of classics is teaching ancient errors and in the other seminar they say that the professor of the social sciences is muddling in modern superstition. Well, what is superstition? Superstition may be defined as whatever Ego does not believe or is not interested in.

I have heard Protestants say that Roman Catholics are superstitious, and I have heard those same Protestants say that other Protestants are superstitious. In other words, the uneducated are those who were not

educated as Ego. All this gets us nowhere in research. A research worker eschews such terms as 'superstition', 'ignorance', 'follies.' Instead, he studies the beliefs of people, their social orientation, their customs.

Research among Christians is retarded because so many of us are condemnatory, whereas we ought to be curious.

The fourth shibboleth is, 'I am studying religion; *what* are you studying?' For instance, the man whose speciality is research into the scriptures may repeat this. Or the man whose discipline is philosophy may say, 'The Six Systems are the epitome of Indian religions; what are you studying?' The Cultural Anthropologist may say, 'No religion can be understood apart from its culture; what *are* you studying?' This shibboleth supposes that religion is chiefly embodied in the academic task of Ego, and that all other chairs in the seminary are devices to relieve unemployment. We endure these other professors because they are, after all, good fellows. But when we get outside our own campus to deal with professors of other seminaries, as in an effervescent committee, then the unfortunate antagonism bristles: 'I am studying religion! What is this you are talking about?'

But enough of these shibboleths. Enough of this departmentalized attitude towards learning. Enough of stalled research. I am pleading that the question ought rather to be, 'To which discipline (among a variety of disciplines) shall this research problem be assigned?' Whatever be the final decision of the researcher, deserves the respect of persons who would have made a different decision, because the Humanities and the Behavioural Sciences are recognized disciplines in the universities of the world. After all, any true student of Indian cultures desires that as many different kinds of knowledge as possible should illuminate a topic of interest to all.

It is not a question of which discipline yields a larger fund of information; which is more important in a clock, the big main spring or the little balance wheel? It is not a question of which discipline provides a certain kind of information; would you want a clock with the same kind of stuff in front of the hands as behind them? It is not a question of which sort of information is integral and which is marginal; would you want a clock with an internal mechanism but no attached legs to stand on? No; you want a clock with a big main spring and a little balance wheel; one with a glass lens and metal cogs; one with well-tuned machinery and a base pedistal to keep it upright. I want to see research in India well-established on the basis of both the Humanities and the Behavioural Sciences. I want to see research into Indian Cultures channelled through philology, oriented in history, systematized by philosophy, and rendered contemporary by the Behavioural Sciences. I prefer that some research problems be assigned to one branch of learning, and some to the other. I hope for the day when research will be recognized for what it is: an inter-departmental endeavour of co-operating workers, who are fully aware of the potentialities in other subjects than their own.

The Department of Organized Research at Leonard Theological College has endeavoured to cultivate both the Humanities and the Behavioural Sciences. The very first research task undertaken by a postgraduate student was entitled, 'The Theology of the Mar Thoma Church as Embodied in its Liturgies'. This was back in the days before any systematic exposition of Mar Thoma doctrine had yet appeared in the English language. Before we could publish our findings, a book appeared in England on the same subject, and we yielded to it. This inquiry was assigned by us to the Humanities.

The next research problem undertaken by one of our research students was also assigned to the Humanities. I refer to our study of the Endowed Branch of a leading non-Christian Sect in Hindi-town. The principal task was linguistic. The postgraduate student produced the first translation into English of the sixteen sacraments of this sect.

Recently we have completed our first historical study. This is now published under the title, 'The Death of a Garrison Church'. This professes to be an analysis of a specific type of institution: the British military congregation. This research student confined his efforts almost entirely to the historical disciplines, because the congregation had disappeared, leaving only one living member to tell the tale. The monograph will be valuable to the extent that it represents a type of institutional behaviour in India.

These three research problems were assigned to the Humanities. Turning to the Behavioural Sciences, I may report the following:

For some years, Mrs Presler and I, with occasional postgraduate students, have been collecting information relative to what in the English language goes by the name of ecstacy. We have assigned this problem to the Psychology of Religion, and are looking at it from that specific orientation. As ecstacy in our city is synchronized with certain festival occasions, this becomes a long-term investigation.

We have a manuscript entitled, 'Urbanization of Telegu Village Marriage Rituals,' which pertains to the changes, theological and ritualistic, that have occurred in the marriage rites of Christians attendant upon transplantation from the rural to the city congregation. This, and S. Jayakar's published monograph, *Rural Sweepers in the City*, are research problems which we assigned to the Sociology of Religion.

Among the published papers should be mentioned, Rev. and Mrs G. R. Job's *Folkways Affecting Disease*, which attempts to explain the religious and social customs observed after the onset of disease. This two-year investigation was assigned to cultural anthropology.

Another published anthropological study is J. Thangiah's *Acculturation of Jabalpur Tamils* which traces the changes in cultural (including religious) patterns among a group of Tamil immigrants to Madhya Pradesh.

I mention some of our research efforts to illustrate that within our department, at least, there is no civil war between the Humanities and the Behavioural Sciences. Whatever the merit of these studies, they have taught us and our students that substantial contributions to

knowledge may be made by either the Humanities or the Behavioural Sciences. For my part, I have endeavoured to combine both in my own writings.

In sum, research into Indian cultures may become an inter-departmental endeavour when the potentialities in the various research procedures are recognized by more and more workers.

BOOK REVIEWS

Synopsis of Haridas Chanduri, Sri Aurobindo, the Prophet of Life Divine (Pondicherry, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1951).

The Aim of Integral Yoga

Sri Aurobindo is essentially a seer of Truth, a prophet of Divine Life, a Yogi.

Sri Krishna has said in the Gita that a yogi or a man dynamically united with the Divine is far preferable in his eyes, to a man of action or a man of contemplation or a man of total renunciation. Yoga is essentially a channel of the closest and most fruitful union with the Divine. Sri Aurobindo has given yoga a unique and dynamic form.

The word literally means union. It signifies the union of man with God.

Life and Yoga

Our whole life process is itself a sort of Yoga. The essence of integral yoga is conscious co-operation with the power of the spirit. The aim of integral yoga is integral union with the infinite. It is the power of the Infinite, that which is metaphysically called the 'Divine Mother'.

The first distinguishing feature of integral yoga is a complete change of being, a total conversion of consciousness. The change of conversion is effected by the sovereign dynamism of the spirit.

He said the ancient Indian yogis were attracted by Samadhi or spiritual trance. Samadhi represents identity with the spirit.

The second important characteristics of integral yoga is that it sincerely believes in the collective liberation of the human race.

Integral yoga is the art of building immortal life on earth. It is the technique of bringing to harmonious fruition the divergent currents of spiritual activity in the past. Integral yoga is the art of living to the full a life of the spirit.

The Main Principles of Integral Yoga

Integral spirituality or Purna Yoga accepts the truth of the essential unity of all religions. Though Purna Yoga points out that through the Divine Reality or the Supreme, Truth is one and indivisible, still it has a rich diversity of forms. For example, some realize God mainly as power (Islam); some realize Him mainly as Law or Righteousness (Judaism); some realize Him mainly as Love (Christianity); some realize Him mainly as knowledge (Vedantism); some realize Him mainly

as Energy or Sakti (Tantricism), and some realize Him mainly as Superbundant Being (Vedic Religion).

Sri Aurobindo maintains that full integral realization can be had only on the supramental level.

The Superman or Divine Man

Sri Aurobindo refuses to believe that Man is the last word in the process of terrestrial evolution. He is firm in his conviction that final fruition of all human progress would consist in a unique form of self-exceeding and self-transcending. Just as the animal has the living laboratory in which Nature has evolved out man, so also man himself is a thinking and living laboratory in whom and with whose conscious co-operation she is striving to work out the Divine Man or Superman.

Supermanhood

The superman is essentially the playmate of the Divine in his cosmic self-expressions and creative adventure. Supermanhood implies not only the realization of God on the lofty summit of spiritual experience, but also the dynamic manifestation of God in the material circumstances of our human living.

Supermanhood will be found to be a generous ideal for the progressive human race. It is an ideal of collective transformation or racial evolution. What is needed today in order to save us from recurrent, catastrophes is a democracy of supermen.

Nietzsche and Aurobindo

The superman as conceived by Nietzsche is an embodiment of absolute power. Nietzsche's superman is over-ruling and all-dominating. He places his superman beyond good and evil.

For Sri Aurobindo man is not the highest reality, but is the highest medium of self-manifestation of the Divine on earth. There is indeed some truth in saying that man is made in the image of God, but man as such an image only is potential. The superman is man turned into a perfect image of the Divine.

The Avatar and the Superman

A superman is essentially a divine man or a thoroughly divinized man.

The Avatar is the Divine directly descended into humanity; the superman is integrally transformed into divinity. Both represent the meeting of the divine and human.

—M. E. Idiculla

ROBERT REDFIELD, *The Primitive World and its Transformations* (Ithica NY, Cornell University Press, 1957)

The peoples who existed before the rise of the first cities can be conveniently referred to as the precivilized peoples. Compared with civilized societies, the precivilized societies exhibit certain characteristics that distinguish them from civilized societies. Some of these characteristics are: isolation and homogenity. These distinctions are in degree, but they are important.

In the first chapter with the title, 'Human society before the Urban Revolution,' the author tries to describe the conditions of human living that must have prevailed before civilization began.

The second chapter which gives a sketchy account of what happened to the precivilized and primitive societies after civilization had come into existence, is entitled, 'Later Histories of the Folk Societies'.

In the next, 'Civilization and the Moral Order', a very important change in human affairs is brought out: The disintegration of the local moral order that takes place in civilization and the rise of more inclusive moral orders. With this great change Redfield associated the rise of ideas as forces in history, influencing the moral order directly.

The fourth chapter, 'Primitive World View and Civilization', is concerned with the transformation of a primitive world view, wherein man comes at last to confront a universe empty of personality and indifferent to man. 'In the primary condition of humanity, man looked out upon a cosmos partaking at once of the qualities of man, nature and God. The subsequent development results in a world view in which God and man are both separated from nature, and in which the exploitation of material nature comes to be a prime attitude as a particular 'cultural invention'. (pp. 103 and 110).

'Man Makes Himself', the 5th chapter, seems to be very dynamic in this book. Here the author takes up the appearance and development of man's assumed competence to construct himself and society by deliberate design. In other words the transformation is self-management.

In the last chapter the reader is taken from the strict anthropological analysis to a more practical ethics dealing with one very important aspect of this great change whereby man comes to assume responsibility for fashioning his world. It is concerned with the effect of civilization in altering standards by which man judges that human conduct is good or bad. So this chapter is titled, 'The Transformation of Ethical Judgement'.

Robert Redfield admits openly the influences of Professor V. Gordon Child, A. N. Whitehead and A. Toynbee in his thought and writing. From the very first chapter onwards he gives special stress to ethical aspects. Thus, he says in page 17, 'We may suppose that fifty thousand years ago mankind developed a variety of moral orders, each expressed in some local tradition, and comparable to what we find among aborigines today. Their development required both the organic evolution of

human bodily and cerebral nature, and also the accumulation of experience by tradition.'

One praiseworthy quality of the book is that a scholarly and vital subject is dealt with in a simple and attractive way, avoiding all technical terms and thus making it readable and understandable to the average reader.

—K. O. SAM

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